

The Power of Honor: My Experience at the Grave of Charles Finney

God is big on honoring the memory of the righteous (Prov. 10:7; Mark 14:9; 1 Kings 11:13, 32, 34, 36; Jer. 15:1; Ezek. 14:14, 20). Like many people, I sometimes go to the graves of my parents, grandparents, soldiers, great leaders, etc., to honor their memory and reflect on their lives. I don't try to communicate with them, which obviously is forbidden in Scripture, nor do I try to receive impartations from them. I do, however, usually spend some time visiting with the Lord while there. Typically, **I thank God for the person's life and the heritage He gave me through them**; I usually acknowledge the price they paid for the gospel or, if appropriate, for my freedom; I remind myself that I'm a link in the chain of history and that I must continue their legacy. In the solemnity of the moment and as an honor to their faithfulness and sacrifice, I often rededicate myself to the Lord's cause.

While ministering near Oberlin, Ohio, this past Sunday, September 21, I had the privilege of visiting the grave of Charles Finney. Finney, an attorney turned evangelist, was one of the greatest revivalists who has ever lived. He was a leader in the Second Great Awakening, and is often called, The Father of Modern Revivalism. He also promoted social reforms, such as the abolition of slavery and equal education for women. Just as I have with stumps, trees, rocks, monuments, chairs, beds, pews and wooden benches in the front of churches, I used his grave as an altar. I thanked God for Finney and those like him who have left us powerful legacies and examples. I reminded the Holy Spirit of the First and Second Great Awakenings, and appealed to heaven for another. As I pondered and honored the work of Finney and others gone before me, I once again committed myself to God and His cause.

Then, in a very holy moment, I pledged to the young men and women with me that I would be a faithful father to them and their generation.

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As we prayed, God chose this time and place to meet with me in a powerful way. I was overcome, as I have been before, with God's heart and love for America. I wept, as we all cried out for revival in our land. Why did God meet me there in such a strong way? Perhaps it was to honor the memory of Finney, a faithful son; or, since awakening and harvest is what Finney so powerfully represents, maybe it was a confirmation that God is, indeed, going to give us another great awakening; and it could have been to remind us that we are part of something bigger than ourselves—that the great cloud of witnesses is watching and cheering us on, knowing fully that we're the continuation of their efforts (Heb. 11:39-12:2). Whatever His reason for choosing this time and place, **the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon me. I was re-mantled and re-anointed.**

A *mantle* in Old Testament times was simply a garment that pictured or symbolized an individual being clothed with the Holy Spirit and His ability. Jesus said, "The Spirit of the Lord is *upon* me..." (Luke 4:18, emphasis added). An *anointing* in the Old Testament referred to rubbing or smearing with oil as a picture of the Holy Spirit's impartation and empowering. In the above verse, Jesus referenced this, adding, "He [Holy Spirit] has anointed Me." Those of us who speak of "mantles" and "anointings" are using biblical symbolism to describe **impartations that empower and equip us for a particular task or function.** Sunday, for my assignment to America, I was re-mantled and re-anointed with a fresh impartation of Holy Spirit.

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God is not finished with America. Don't be moved by the naysayers, don't give in to hope deferred. **There *is* a third Great Awakening coming to our land.** There *is* another broad and passionate "appeal to heaven" occurring in our land, which will be honored, just as it was when our nation was born. There *is* a re-connecting to the covenants, promises and sacrifices of our forefathers. And there *will be* an answer from Heaven in the form of the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit the earth has ever experienced—in America, and around the world. You are part of this! **Keep crying out for revival—and cry out for revivalists like Finney to be raised up in our day.**

Be encouraged—He is listening!